Hawaiian Gazette

EST MODUS IN REBUS.

TUESDAY, : NOVEMBER 6, 1888.

"The grating and scraping and rasping" sensation of which the Bulletin complained as a result of our plain presentation of sound doctrine appears to have extended to its staff of regular and semi-editorial correspondents. Their sufferings are evidently severe, but we hope they will prove salutary. We are sorry for them, of course, but hardly see how we can afford them any present relief. To their perverted and depraved tastes, the medicine doubtless seems very bitter. But it is wholesome and, if they only knew it, will do them lots of good. If on the other hand they will not listen to good advice, but continue to dance and howl like a lot of bedlamites, it will be our duty to continue "the grating and scraping and rasping" process entirely regardless of their feelings.

Sheriff Hitchcock is doing good work on Hawaii, and is showing himself to be a thoroughly energetic public servant, and one who never spares himself physical exertion when duty has to be done. He has pounced down upon various parts of the Island, and has pretty nearly cleared it of the illicit liquor sellers. These illicit liquor dealers were chiefly Portuguese and Chinese. The districts of North and South Kohala, of Hamakua and of Hilo have been completely swept off their feet. The Sheriff should now devote himself to the okolehao distillers. This liquor is made from the ti root, which grows in the forest sections of Hawaii, and for this reason the distilleries are hidden away in remote places from the settlements, and consequently more difficult to find. They are, as far as we can learn, by no means completely eradicated. To assist him in this work, and in fact in all the work of the Island, the Sheriff should have at his disposal a small force of mounted police. We alluded to this matter a few weeks ago. To efficiently patrol an island like Hawaii especially—but the remark holds good for the Islands in general—a proper mounted force is necessary. As it is now, there is no patrolling. When a crime is reported down goes a squad of police, but the police are only used for punishment and arrest, not for repression. Now their functions are two-fold, they have to keep order as well as to punish for breaches of the law. As the case now stands they can and do fulfill only one part of their duty.

Hilo has obtained a very unenviable notoriety for crimes of violence. Several crimes have been committed and the officers of justice, though they have very strong evidence and are almost morally certain who the parties are who committed the whole series of crimes, or rather we should say who originated and planned them, have not yet sufficient evidence that would satisfy a court of justice. There is no doubt that the whole series of crimes have been committed by Chinamen, and there is also further no doubt that the Chinese societies here are very strong and that a few terrorize over the mass of Chinese. To break up those societies should be the aim of the Hawaiian Government. What is true of Hilo is true of several other districts, only that the number of plantations in the Hilo district and the large number of hands employed concentrate a large population in a comparatively small sphere. The alarm felt through Hilo and Puna on account of the recent events is very real and the indignation expressed by the native population over the cold-blooded murder of the old schoolmaster Kapahee was very strong. The deputy Sheriff did not dare to take his prisoner to Hilo from the lock-up at Pohoiki overland, for had he attempted it, he and his small posse of police could never have got him in alive. The prisoner was carried by water in a whale boat, and even then a crowd rushed down to the wharf at Hilo eager to lynch the man, and it took a strong force of police to get him safely in jail. Our readers will remember the circumstances of the murder. A native schoolmaster named Kapahee was struck down, in broad daylight, not a quarter of a mile from Captain Eldert's house, and the body hidden in the bush. It is not often that Hawaiians feel as strongly as they have done on this occasion, and their feelings are so very clearly expressed that for the present few Chinese, we are informed, care to travel through Puna. Meanwhile the inhabitants themselves are very careful to go armed when they move about from place to place. And though we must say we object to the carrying of firearms, still we think there is some justification for people to feel alarm when they have to travel miles of bush, where habitations are two to a dozen miles apart, and where a man can be knocked on the head and his body hidden away twenty yards from the road, and no one be a bit the wiser till the unfortunate is "missed." It was two or three days before the actual fact of Kapahee's murder was discovered. He was only "missed."

Cattle are low. That is a fact and there are by no means very prosperous times before our ranchers. Something, however, might be done if they could break down a monopoly or two. When articles are low, the consumption is larger, and the profit can be made by selling a larger quantity. That of course can only be done by selling at a reduced rate, for cheapness increases the demand. But however low the stock raiser may sell at, the consumer is still obliged to pay high rates. The consequence is that the stock raiser has a limited market. How low cattle are may be judged when a considerable number of well grown calves changed hands the other day at five dollars a head. The ranch that was doing the business found that it paid to sell as low as that, but it did not suit the manipulators elsewhere, and a stop was put to the sale. Yet at this price the ranch was doing rather better than by shipping to Honolulu. However, it is not only the outlet at Honolulu that our cattle men should look to. There are large cattle lands here that would carry far more stock than they do now. If some proper and profitable outlet could be found, the amount of stock on the various runs could be advantageously increased.

The country imports a large quantity of salt beef and a considerable quantity of tinned beef. The curing of beef was some twenty or thirty years ago a profitable business, and men like Macy & Lousada, of Hawaii, and Krull, of Kauai, for many years realized handsomely from it. Then came a period of depression, after the collapse of the whaling fleet in 1872, for it was to the whaling fleet that the beef used to be sold, and the industry died a very gentle and peaceful death. Everyone was eager to make money out of sugar. There was a demand for cattle for the plantations and the ranchers found it more profitable to raise working oxen than to sell fresh beef. But that halcyon time could not last forever. The plantations have gone into the cattle business for themselves, or have taken controlling interests in contiguous lands, and raise their own working cattle and supply their own beef. The ranchman pure and simple is, therefore, in a hard case. His product is good. Why cannot he make a profit on his labor? He must face the present position. Combination would very soon break down the monopoly. Determination would soon enable him to find a market for his product in some preserved form. We have suggested salting or corning. There is no reason why this country should not tin beef. Both for salt and tinned beef there is a steady demand here, as witness our Custom House returns. Why should we go abroad for our supplies, when we can produce them here just as well.

One of the most convincing proofs that could be offered of the strength of the Reform party, and of the hold it is supposed to have on the people is found in the eagerness of aspiring politicians and would-be leaders in public affairs to be identified with that party, and to be regarded as prominent and influential in its councils. This was very noticeable at the last nominating convention. Men whose personal character and habits, whose political and social affiliations, to say nothing of their known and openly expressed opinions, forbid the idea of their feeling any particular interest in good government, or having any real sympathy with the avowed principles of the Reform party, rushed to the front, and busied themselves with organizing caucuses, getting up tickets, and pulling wires for the election of themselves and their friends to the convention, with an alacrity which could hardly have been born of regard for the public weal. We do not criticise the general composition of the convention, which was unquestionably sound, the great majority of the delegates being good men and true, who were fairly representative of constituents who believe in reform, and who have worked earnestly for its accomplishment. But there were some men there, and cutting rather a conspicuous figure at that, who, whatever the "regularity" of their credentials, were in reality as much out of place as the editor of the Advertiser would be in a political pow-wow at the Palace. Now human nature is about the same wherever we find it. Politicians in Hawaii are no more anxious than they are elsewhere to identify themselves with a losing cause, or to struggle for prominence in a party which has accomplished all it is ever likely to, which has outlived its usefulness, and is about to vanish away. These people's words may be brave words, certainly they have been, in many instances decidedly bitter ones, but their acts give the lie to their words as flatly as the lie was ever given anywhere. They may denounce the reform movement as a farce and a fraud, they may abuse the Ministry and the Legislature, they may say the whole thing from top to bottom is "rotten," which adjective, by the way, is one of their favorites, and they may declare that the next general election will see the Reform party wiped out of existence. At the same time they show by their conduct that they consider a recognized standing in that party to be not only a proper, but a necessary thing for gentlemen having political aspirations, and the control of the party organization essential to the success of their schemes and the grinding of their various little axes. This is one of those cases in which actions speak louder than words.

An enlargement of scope, although on the basis of the original organization, has been resolved upon by the Planters' Labor and Supply Company. The essential thing being the functions of the association, it was not necessary to incur the inconvenience of getting a new charter, with all the consequential trouble and expense. What is important has been agreed to, in the resolution to enlarge the field of operations. The fact is, moreover—as Col. Spalding stated to the convention—that this departure is simply a return to first intentions in the incipiency of the company. It was the original purpose of those who started the institution that its objects should comprehend the promotion of all agricultural as well as manufacturing industries in this Kingdom. A scarcity of labor having, however, become a paramount concern with those interested in our leading staple of sugar, the procuring of an adequate supply of plantation help gave one of the principal objects, as well as part of the name, to the "Planters' Labor and Supply Company." This subject of labor has up till now been one of the most conspicuous in the deliberations and work of the organization. The difficulties to be encountered in getting labor having become greatly reduced, as well as methods and co-operation with the Government systematized in that regard, the corporation has come to find its occupation largely gone. It was therefore evident that without securing more work to do, the company would for lack of exercise speedily pass through all the stages of fatal decline. With the expansion of the association's effort a new method of raising the requisite funds has been adopted. The system of assessments had developed into virtually a voluntary taxation, for although the dues were enforceable by virtue of chartered powers, there seems to have been a delicacy on the part of the executive to collect them from individual members. Under the new system planting and milling concerns, desirous—and most of them will be so—to share in the benefits of co-operation for common ends, are required to pay $25 per annum to the association's treasury. As this is but a trifle to any of such corporations and not a personal tax, there should be no such thing as arrears from that source of revenue. Again, everybody who pays the annual fee of $5, no matter whether engaged in sugar producing or not, will be admitted to all the privileges of membership. The suggestions made by the committee give some idea of the elasticity of the new functions of the organization. There is room in the company now for all who think they can make two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, or do anything to promote in any way the industrial life of the country. If the Planters' Company becomes what it ought to be under its new lease of life, it should do well what the Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society has but indifferently performed and faintly attempted. There are questions which neither of these societies have given much if any attention to, but which have the most vital bearing upon the future of agricultural enterprise. Within the hour that pen has been put to this article, a small landholder in the suburbs has called our attention to such a question. It is that of insect pests upon vegetation, and this man's experience—to be related, we hope, by himself—is one of just those things calculated to be of great service when disclosed to such an organization as the new agricultural society, there to be intelligently discussed.

Special Notices.